TO: Shared Governance Oversight Committee
FROM: Graduate Council
RE: Revision of the Grading System for Graduate Level courses
DATE: March 29, 2012

The current grading policy for graduate courses at Arkansas State University includes two levels of a failing grade. Both 'D' and 'F' are failing grades for graduate courses. This causes confusion regarding student understanding of academic standing, grade point average, and progress to degree. Students familiar with the undergraduate policy of a 'D' being a passing grade do not always realize they have failed a graduate course when they receive a 'D' grade. The 'D' grade, while failing, still receives one grade point per credit hour, indicating some level of merit above the 'F' grade while still failing. A grade of 'F' will result in suspension from the Graduate School, while a grade of 'D' does not (unless the student is already on Academic Probation.

A recent email survey to the members of the Council of Graduate Schools revealed that all responding institutions, like ASU, only considered grades of 'C' or better as passing for graduate level courses. However, more than two-thirds of those responding do not even include the 'D' grade within their system, thus eliminating the confusion of having two different levels of course failure. At this time, the Graduate Council proposes that ASU adopt this grading system by eliminating the 'D' grade from graduate level courses. There is no need for two levels of a failing grade.

The current grading system from the Graduate Bulletin is reproduced below, followed by the proposed system. An additional sentence is also added to clarify the existing procedure for non-letter grade courses to not be used for GPA calculations.

CURRENT:

GRADING SYSTEM
   The letters, A, B, C, P, D, F, FN, I, IP, and CR are used in grading, indicating the following qualities:

A	Excellent
B	Good
C	Fair
P	Pass
D & F	Failure
FN	Failure for Non Attendance
I	Incomplete
IP	In Progress (Thesis and Dissertation only)
CR	Credit Awarded for completed thesis/dissertation
NC	No Credit awarded for thesis/dissertation work

   For the purpose of computing cumulative and collective grade averages, grade points

are assigned as follows:

A	4
B	3
C	2
P	0
D	1
F	0

Students' grade point averages are computed by multiplying the number of hours credit of each grade by the grade points assigned to that grade and dividing the sum of these several products by the total number of hours in which the students were enrolled.

An incomplete grade not removed within one semester unless extenuating circumstances are provided in writing to the Graduate School, will be recorded as "F."

No grade below "C" will be accepted for graduate credit.

PROPOSED:

GRADING SYSTEM

The letters, A, B, C, P, D, F, FN, I, IP, and CR are used in grading, indicating the following qualities:

A	Excellent
B	Good
C	Fair
P	Pass
D ~~& F~~	Failure
FN	Failure for Non Attendance
I	Incomplete
IP	In Progress (Thesis and Dissertation only)
CR	Credit Awarded for completed thesis/dissertation
NC	No Credit awarded for thesis/dissertation work

For the purpose of computing cumulative and collective grade averages, grade points are assigned as follows:

A	4
B	3
C	2
~~P~~	~~0~~
~~D~~	~~1~~
F, FN	0

Students' grade point averages are computed by multiplying the number of hours credit of each grade by the grade points assigned to that grade and dividing the sum of these several products by the total number of hours in which the students were enrolled. Grades of P, CR, and NC are not assigned grade points, and hours associated with these grades are not used in computing grade point averages.

An incomplete grade not removed within one semester unless extenuating circumstances are provided in writing to the Graduate School, will be recorded as "F."

No grade below "C" will be accepted for graduate credit.